

Faculty of Music
University of Toronto

Thursday evening series

THE CONTEMPORARY CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

Arthur Weisberg, *conductor*

Paul Dunkel, *flute*

Arthur Bloom, *clarinet*

Donald MacCourt, *bassoon*

Linda Quan, *violin*

Jack Glick, *viola*

Fred Sherry, *cello*

Gilbert Kalish, *piano*

Raymond DesRoches, *percussion*

with

Jan De Gaetani, *mezzo-soprano*

Concert Hall

Edward Johnson Building

Thursday, January 24, 1974 at 8:30 p.m.

PROGRAM

Tropi (1959) Nicolo Castiglioni

Tropi was written in 1959 for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion. Rather than utilizing the twelve-tone system developed and explored by Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern, it is built around three tetrachords, or "tropi" which comprise a twelve-note set. Silence and intricate rhythms add to the rich musical texture.

Septet (1965-66) Arthur Berger

I
II
III

Arthur Berger, Walter W. Naumburg Professor of Music at Brandeis University, wrote the *Septet* on commission by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation. The first performance took place on November 25, 1966, at the Library of Congress. Mr. Berger, a recent recipient of a National Arts Council Grant, writes as follows of his work:

"Though the vogue of program music came to an end long ago, a program note is still read not infrequently as if it were what its name literally suggests: 'the program' of a piece, now stated, of course, in formal rather than literary terms. Let me, therefore, say that the purpose of my remarks is not to alert the listener to devices necessarily to be 'heard' as such (he might as a consequence miss more important things), but to indicate a few of the many procedures that guided me while composing (procedures, need I say, not always formulated consciously.)

"The three movements are essentially sections of a single movement separated by extended breathing spaces. Differentiation is not particularly evident at the start of each new section, nor does it take place gradually or systematically as the work proceeds. Thus, the brief silences that occur at fairly frequent intervals in the first movement, as well as relative sparseness of this movement, may still occasionally be found later even though the inclination is ultimately towards greater continuity and density. Increasing density is brought about not only by more frequently spanning a wide register, but by a greater number of pitches filling the span. My special concern with registration led me to adopt a plan that assigned fixed octave positions to each of a number of pitches for several measures at a time. This provided a stable source for the formation of chords within each of these brief segments. The 'harmony' based on registral transformations of intervals of the second (mostly minor) was thereby consigned to a slow rate of change."

IN AETERNUM Joseph Schwantner

In Aeternum for Cello and IV Players, subtitled Consortium IV, is the third of three pieces written specifically for the Boston Musica Viva. My original intention was to write a solo piece for cellist Jay Humeston but as work progressed it became clear to me that other instruments were required to support the cello music.

The decision to employ a multiple instrumentation for each player was based upon my desire to increase the number of sonorous and articulative possibilities that could be made available to a player and to the instrumental ensemble as a whole. While the disposition of the performers in this manner is neither new nor particularly original, I felt nevertheless that dealing with the ensemble from this perspective provided for me fertile ground for potentially interesting musical possibilities.

The title, *In Aeternum*, in Latin means "forever," and relates to a set structure employed which generates thirty-six pitches in a closed intervallically symmetrical cycle or loop with each pitch of the twelve-tone chromatic appearing exactly three times. This is one of five sets used in this work, the other four being hexachordally symmetrical twelve-tone sets. Each player partakes in all sets except one which only the cello has responsibility for presenting. The cello music is thus identified by the specific structural characteristics of its set.

In Aeternum varies between sections that present highly specified measured rhythms and sections where the rhythmic relationship of individual parts among the players is more "performer-decision oriented." Here the attempt was to provide a soloistic and individualistic framework for the players, within limits, which would allow for a variability of interpretation from performance to performance.

INTERMISSION

Pierrot Lunaire Op. 21 (1912) Arnold Schoenberg

Arnold Schoenberg wrote *Pierrot Lunaire* in 1912 at the request of the actress Albertine Zehme, whose acquaintance the composer had made shortly after he moved from Vienna to Berlin in 1911. As usual, Schoenberg wrote with incredible speed: all but two of the pieces were composed between March 12 and May 30, and fourteen of them required no more than a single day each for completion. The actress had originally wanted only a piano accompaniment to her recitation; Schoenberg extracted permission to use the other instruments one by one. Thus economic considerations played a significant role in the formation of the ensemble that lends *Pierrot* its remarkable timbral profile.

The first performance took place on October 16, 1912, in a small theater in Berlin. Frau Zehme recited in a Columbine costume, while Schoenberg conducted the musicians behind a transparent scrim.

Schoenberg gave an important key to his attitude towards the texts in his foreword to the published score, when he wrote: "In this work, the performers at no time have the task of shaping the mood and character of the individual pieces according to the meaning of the words, but rather according to the music. To whatever extent the composer felt a tone-pictorial representation of the actions and feelings indicated in the text to be important, it is simply to be found in the music. Where the performer does not find such representation, he should refrain from adding anything that the composer did not want. In this instance he would not be adding, but rather detracting."

Part I

Mondestrunken (Moondrunk)
Columbine (Columbine)
Der Dandy (The Dandy)
Eine Blasse Wäscherin (A Pale Washerwoman)
Valse de Chopin (Valse de Chopin)
Madonna (Madonna)
Der Kranke Mond (The Sick Moon)

Part II

Nacht (Passacaglia) (Night, Passacaglia)
Gebet an Pierrot (Prayer to Pierrot)
Raub (Theft)
Rote Messe (Red Mass)
Galgenlied (Gallows Ditty)
Enthauptung (Beheading)
Die Kreuze (The Crosses)

Part III

Heimweh (Homesickness)
Gemeinheit! (Vulgar Horseplay!)
Parodie (Parody)
Der Mondfleck (The Moonfleck)
Serenade (Serenade)
Heimfahrt (Barcarole) (Homeward Journey, Barcarole)
O Alter Duft (O Scent of Fabled Yesteryear)

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Next Thursday Evening Series: **February 28, 1974 — Janacek String Quartet**

Next Event: **Friday, January 25, 1974 — Opera — Don Giovanni at 8 p.m.**